

Image of Islam and Western Media: An over view of studies about portrayal of Islam and Islamic world (1971-2001)

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ABSTRACT:

This article presents an over view of studies conducted by the various scholars about portrayal of Islam and Islamic world during the time period (1971-2001). It is claimed that mainstream media of west and US have been disseminating false information about Islamic world since the several decades. Due to the distorted images, developed and manipulated by the media, Islam is the name of negativity in the west. It is generally believed that western and United States mainstream media often misrepresents and inaccurately interprets/portrays Islam, Islamic world and its manifestation. After conducting in depth analysis of various studies regarding portrayal of Islamic world prior the incident of 9/11, it was found that elite media in the United States including the newspapers: Like New York Times and Washington post; the magazines: like Time and News Week, electronic media including: like ABC, CBS, NBS & CNN have been highlighting Islamic world in negative and unfavorable manner. It is said this anti Islamic campaign has reached to enormous proportion with the demise of communism. The findings of several studies indicate that analyst, in Islamic world believe

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that negative image of Islamic country is primarily a conspiracy of American foreign office to invent a new bogey and enemy to fill vacuum created by the collapse of Soviet Union and world wide desperation of communism, particularly demise of communism in former USSR.

Key words: Image, Western Media, portrayal, Islam, Muslim World and American Mainstream Media.

Introduction:

The confrontation between Islam and the West is not a new phenomenon. The history bears witness to the fact that the conflicts and military confrontation between west and Islam trace back to the era of prophet Muhammad in the seventh century and run through the Byzantine empire, the crusades, the Spanish re-conquered, the fall of Constantinople, the eras of colonial and national independence, cold war era, post cold war era and above all, after the incident of 9/11¹

It is claimed that main stream media of west and US have been disseminating false information about Islamic world since the several decades.

Due to the distorted images, developed and manipulated by the media, Islam is the name of negativity in the West. It is generally believed that Western and United States mainstream media often misrepresents and inaccurately interprets /portrays, Islam, Islamic world and its manifestation.

The elite media in the United States including the newspapers: Like New York Times and Washington post; the magazines: like Time and News Week, electronic media including: like ABC, CBS, NBC &

CNN have been highlighting Islamic world in negative and unfavorable manner. It is said this anti Islamic campaign has reached to enormous proportion with the demise of communism. As Trinka James has mentioned in her article that analyst, in Islamic world believe that negative image of Islamic country is primarily a conspiracy of American foreign office to invent a new bogey and enemy to fill vacuum created by the collapse of Soviet Union. and world wide dissipation of communism, particularly demise of communism in former USSR².

Objective of the research:

- The first objective of this research article is to present in-depth review of the relevant literature related to image and portrayal of Islam, Muslims and Muslim World.
- The second objective of this research paper is to describe and identify the research designs and techniques used by the various researchers for the analysis pertaining to portrayal of Islam & Muslim world by Western and American Media.

Statement of the Problem:

This research article aims to present review of the studies in chronological order about portrayal of Islam and Muslim world in Western and American Media before 9/11 during the specific time period of 1971-2001.

Before 9/11, there has been only a limited supply of research about coverage and portrayals of Muslims and Islam by the Western Media. Most of the research project regarding images of Islam based on quantitative method of research. For the most part, quantitative studies have focused on specific types of Muslims, mainly Arab community.

Brief introduction or crux of these studies is being described in this first part of the chapter.

- ◎ J J Terry (1971) has investigated /conducted a content analysis of American newspapers about nationalism of Arab world.³
- ◎ In another study, JJ Terry (1975) has focused coverage of Western Press regarding Arab in America. The research has explored the myths and realities about Arabs constructed by the media.⁴
- ◎ V M. Mishra (1978), in his research article has analyzed news stories of Middle East in five major media outlets of United States. The portrayal positive or negative, of Middle East in United States media was the prime focus of the study.⁵
- ◎ M. O. ASI (1981) has conducted a content analysis of news stories about Arab and Israel appeared / reported in ABC, CBS, and NBC between specific time periods of 1970-79. In his doctoral dissertation, M. O. ASI, the researcher has presented comparison of coverage of Arabs and Israelis in United States media, positive, negative or neutral treatment of news stories about Arabs and Israelis by United States media was the core objectives of his PhD thesis.⁶
- ◎ E. Ghareeb (1983), in his article has critically analyzed the portrayals of Arabs in the American news media.⁷
- ◎ O. M. W. Sulleiman (1983) has analyzed and presented perceptions of American about Arabs and its effect on Middle East.⁸ Other broader investigations are limited in social-scientific terms, in that they are mainly literary critics lacking quantifiable

evidence to support their hypothesis. The studies about portrayal of Arabs, in particular and Muslims in general, by the social scientists, are as under:

- ◎ Abu Laban and Zeady (1975) research about portrayal of Islam.⁹
- ◎ Edward said, (1981) work about covering of Islam by Western Media.¹⁰
- ◎ Edward Said, another study (1978) about orientalism.¹¹
- ◎ J. J. Terry research (1988) about Arab Stereotypes in popular writings.¹²

The above mentioned social scientists have presented their point of view about portrayal of Islam without any support of quantifiable evidence by proving or discarding their hypothesis.

In his doctoral dissertation, N. H. Ghandonr (1984), has presented his analysis about coverage of the Arab world and Israel in American news magazines. In this connection, news stories pertaining to Arab and Israel, published in American magazines (the time frame of 1975 to 1981) were undertaken by the researcher.¹³

I. S. Mousa (1984) in his study has highlighted the role of United States media in building or distorting the image of Arabs.¹⁴

M. W. Suleiman (1988) in his study entitled the Arabs in the mind of America has described the perceptions, stereotypes and point of view of American about Arabs. He (1998) has described an historical indictment of news treatment of both Muslims and Middle East by analyzing news coverage. His findings indicate that in 1950, president Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt becomes of focus of a aggression and vindictive campaign that characterized him as Hitler on the Nile and as a

crypto communist at the same time. The Palestinian Liberation Organization and Palestinian peoples as a whole were presented as terrorist, particularly when an act of terrorism captured headlines regardless of whether or not the PLO denounced the action.

Similarly Libyan leader Moammer Qaddafi was declared by United States govt. as practically the sole instigator of international terrorism. Moreover, Qaddafi's human identity was strapped from him as he was labeled and depicted as a mad dog. In view of the researcher, more recently, Saddam Hussain has been target of Western anger and portrayed as a "mad man".¹⁵

Al-Zahram (1988), in his doctoral-dissertation, acknowledged as one of a few systematic studies about coverage of Islam-have concentrated specifically on media portrayal of Muslims. He has analyzed news coverage of Muslims on ABC TV news and in the New York Times from 1979 to 1987. His results were consistent with those of other studies which have found generally that coverage of Muslims and Arabs tend to be negative and that most stories focus on crisis events.¹⁶

D. A. Graber (1989) in his book entitled Mass Media and American politics has analyzed the role of media and significance of media in American politics. This book is conducive to understand the impact of United States mass media in portraying the negative image of Muslims.¹⁷

Hussain and Naureckas (1993) has elaborated that Islam is also a significant religious and cultural force in western nations. Like other religious groups, Muslims come from all nations, races, and creed and colour.¹⁸ Dr. Mughees Uddin in his doctoral dissertation has analyzed

role of United States elite press the New York Times, the Washington post and the Los Angles Times, in framing of United States foreign policy with perception of Pakistan. The editorial contents of these newspapers during 1980-92 were analyzed by the researcher.¹⁹

In his master level research, Dr. Mughees has critically investigated and attempted to explore the relationship between a nation foreign policy and its press. The editorial contents of the New York Times and the Times of London were primarily focused by the researcher. Basically, the master level thesis has focused the case of Pakistan, and United States foreign policy towards her (Pakistan). Impact, contributions and significance of the United States media has been analyzed in this connection.²⁰

Dr. Mughees, in another research article, has attempted to find out the role of New York Times, in presenting the case of Kashmir conflict. In this connection, the coverage of New York Times during 1947-48 & 1987-90 were analyzed with perspective of the conflict. United States foreign policy and press performance regarding the case of the Kashmir conflict was the hallmark of the research article.²¹

Prof. Dr. Mughees Uddin, in his article entitled “Image of Iran in the Western Media” has highlighted the way Western Media presented the image of Iran after Islamic revolution. The negative and derogatory role of Media in building distorted image of Iran was prime focus of the study.²²

Dr. Mughees, in another study, has analyzed the United States policy about the Kashmir conflict. In this connection, the portrayal of

Kashmir conflict in the New York Times in light of United States policies have been under taken²³.

Moreover, he has also conducted research and presented his findings in the form of research article regarding the image of Pakistan in the New York Times during time period of 1980-90.²⁴

Dr. Mughees has also written a comprehensive research article on editorial framing of United States elite press about Islamic movement FIS, in Algeria.²⁵

Similarly, in another research article, he has critically presented the role and impact of the United States media about foreign affairs coverage.²⁶

Dr. Mughees has also written a comprehensive and critical article about treatment of western and United States media about Iranian revolution.²⁷

He has also conducted research about the editorial treatment of United States foreign policy in the New York Times regarding Pakistan.²⁸

Prof. Dr. Mughees in his another article entitled “Framing Islamic fundamentalism” the case of Hamas (400 Palestinian Deportees / expellees) & United States elite press” has critically investigated the role of United States elite media in framing the concept of Islamic fundamentalism.²⁹

Sami G. Hajjar in his article entitled “The United States and Islamic fundamentalists: the need for dialogues” has concluded that some influential scholars argue that the United States should not engage in dialogue with Islamic fundamentalists oppositions groups because all are extremist, in view of the author, the basic assumptions about Islamic

fundamentalists that underline the anti dialogue portion are faulty. There are fundamentalists whose advance position that are at least compatible with the percepts of Western liberalism. Sami further adds that engaging such moderates is justified in light of American national interests.³⁰

While on the other hand Daniel Pipes has different point of view about fundamentalist. He categorically proclaimed that all Muslim fundamentalists are dangerous and has urged the United States to adopt a policy of preventing fundamentalist opposition groups from seizing power in Islamic countries. Daniel Pipe was strongly opposed to the Clinton administration negotiations with Palestinian, Egyptian and Algerian fundamentalist movements. According to pipes, the seizure of power by these groups would lead to disastrous consequences, including a threat to the survival of Israel, political unrest in the Gulf, high energy cost, an accelerated arms race, more international terrorism, and unending wars.³¹.

John Eposito's point of view about bogey and bug bear of Islamic fundamentalism is different from Daniel pipe. John argues that the Islamic threat to the West is a myth and that Islam is not antithetical to democracy and supporting traditions of social and political pluralism.³²

Similarly, John William has also similar point of view in this regard. He advised that the United States must become aware that fundamentalists are not our enemies, but our partner and potential friends, who can be talked to and who can be understood.³³

Muhammad Abdul Yamini in his article entitled "Islam and West: The need for mutual understanding" pin pointed that the

misrepresentation of Islam, which was limited in the past to the printed word, has now mushroomed to all forms of mass communication. The entertainment industry, news telecast, radio shows, the movie industry children's TV programs, and even commercials on billboards all have become vehicles for propagating the misrepresentation of Islam in the West. Literary fictions and non-fiction remain among the most insidious vehicles for permanently damaging the image and concept of Islam in the minds of non-Muslims audience.³⁴

Johan D. Vander Vyver in his article entitled "Religious Fundamentalism & Human Rights", has pointed out in current scenario, fundamentalism in matter of religion has acquired a distinctly negative connotations. As commonly understood fundamentalism is associated with certain trends within a particular religious community may be defined as a generalized tendency, habit of mind that may inspire a variety of specific activities. Subsequently, he has discussed various aspects of Islam and fundamentalism. For instance, depicting Islam as a threat to world peace or national security on account of incidents such as the threat to property and safety of the sisters Jilani and Jahangir in Pakistan, the power politics of Saddam Hussain, or the World Trade Center bombing, would be wrong. The religion solely should not be blamed for all such acts because minority of dissident voices generally responsible for such heinous acts.³⁵ SVR Nasr in his article entitled "Democracy and Islamic revivalism" has analyzed the issue in comprehensive manner and described the reason of revivalism that crisis of governability which creates circumstances that are conducive to the growth of Islamic revivalism. Similarly, the prospects for democracy

have drastically changed the political balance in the Muslim world and renewed concern over the prospects for greater prominence of Islamic revivalism. In his view, the democracy will open the political process to Islamic revivalism and will provide it with a new avenue through which it can pursue its political agenda.³⁶ Andrea Lueg in her article “The perception of Islam in Western debate”: has presented that western portrayal of Islamic world is characterized by ideas of aggression, brutality, fanaticism, irrational medieval backwardness and antipathy towards women, terrible news stories about Muslims are often heard, seen or read in print or electronic media of West or United States. Every where, one hears of militant Muslims or Frenzy Islamists Zealots, who draw the sword of Islam to assault those of opposite faiths.³⁷

Edward P. Djerejian in his research has pinpointed biased and bigotry perception of Western Media towards Islamic world and emphasized the requirement of coherent policy towards Islam. He propounded following key points of the policy towards Islam. Crux of its major points of are as under:

- ◎ Cold war is not being replaced with new competition between West and Islam.
- ◎ American recognizes Islam as one of the world's great faith.

The last but not least, he recommended that instead of building walls, we need to built bridges. He suggested that if we want to live without violence, we have to realize that the other people are as real as we are.³⁸

The Western and United States media links Islam with fundamentalism, militanism and present Islam as threat to the west. In

view of Edward said “for the general public in America and Europe today, Islam is “news of a particularly unpleasant sort-the media, the geopolitical strategists, and although they a marginal to the culture at large- the academic experts on Islam are all in concert: Islam is a threat to western civilization. Now this is by no means the same is saying that only derogatory or racist caricatures of Islam are to be found in the west – what I am saying is that negative images of Islam are very much prevalent than any others, and that such images correspond, not to what Islam “is” but to what prominent sectors of a particular society take it to be:

Those sectors have the power and the will to propagate that particular image of Islam and this image therefore becomes more prevalent, more present, than all others.³⁹

Dr. Carl W. Ernst, in his article has described that is a common perception in United States about Muslim, that they are fundamentalists and terrorists. In his view, ignorance is the main reasons for such negative image about Muslims and Islam. He writes that common Americans familiar only about *Hammas* and Osama Bin Ladin because the United States mass media have given great coverage to them, and portrayed them in negative manner. He concluded that most of the American doesn't know about true face of Islam and their approach about Islam is highly negative.⁴⁰

The United States mass media is also blamed for magnifying conflict, upheavals, deaths and destructions, while any positive and construction development in any sector, in third world developing countries in general and Muslim states, In particular is play down / ignored by United States mass media. For e.g. Christmas, bank holidays,

traffic jams and Notting hills Carnage is news but killing of innocent Palestinian, floods in Bangladesh and massacre, genocides of Muslims in Indian Gujrat is not given appropriate coverage by United States media. According to view of Edward said that Islam is regularly equated with fundamentalism, a concoction of the imagination of the United States policy makers and contrivance of United States and Western media barons and the term fundamentalism is perceived by the West as recourse to terrorism, radicalism, extremism and fanaticism.

Wael Sabri Mirza in his master level dissertation has revealed that heavy usage of words such as fundamentalisms, terrorism, extremist, militant, radical and violence there words were found to be associated frequently with Muslim, Islam and Islamic.⁴¹

Similarly Karim, H. Karim has deplored the dominant portrayal of Muslims as villains who victimize Christians and Jews and highlights how in the times of conflict, propagandist, have portrayed medieval images of Muslims as being essentially violent and barbaric.⁴²

Akbar S. Ahmad in article entitled “the challenge of Islam in the 21st century”: as described four major classifications of Muslim rulers. The first cleric rulers i.e. in Iran. The Western Media depicted this category in such a derogatory and ridiculous style and portrayed Muslims cleric such as dark, scowling, evil looking, and beard figures in black robes. In view of Akbar S. Ahmad, second classification of Muslim rulers comprised of military rulers and monarchies. The third category of Muslim ruler is democratic one, which includes countries such as Egypt, Pakistan, Turkey and Bangladesh. Muslim leaders of this category maneuvering exploit the bugbear of the West regarding radical

Islamists. In this connection their argument is vivid “we are all that stands between you and your worst night mare, that is Muslim fanatics-the dreaded fundamentalists of the media- in the power with itchy Islamic fingers on the trigger. It has been observed that United States and Western Media highlights nuclear powers of Islamic countries as Islamic nuclear powers and portray nuclear bomb as Islamic bomb.

The last but not least, the fourth category, in view of Akber S. Ahmad, rather unsuccessful category is that of the socialist / communist leader, molded on Stalin and the Soviet experience whose appeal lies mainly in rhetoric of core of the poor.⁴³ John Esposito, a renowned Professor of religion and international affairs at George Town University, has argued that to equate Islam and Islamic fundamentalism uncritically with extremism is to judge Islam only by those who wreak havoc—standard not applied to Judaism and Christianity.⁴⁴

Saeed Niaz Ahmad BBC Broad Caster and Columnist for Arab News, in his article, has narrated negative role of Western Media in constructing portrayal of Islamic world. He cited several examples in this regard, for instance, that the arrival of pope in any country is an event that is considered fit enough to run as steamer in newspaper, throughout the world, but Hajj, an annual congregation of more than two million Muslims is hardly reported by the same media. It usually goes as filler.⁴⁵ Sairra Patel in her article entitled “The Media and its representation of Islam and Muslim women” has described in print media in general and on TV in particular Muslim women are portrayed as being weak and submissive to religion which seeks to oppress and dominate. Muslim women who choose to cover themselves are pitied, and are thought the

victims of a patriarchal and misogynist religion. She has explained comprehensively about the right of women in Islam in light of Quran and the sayings of Prophet Muhammad (SAW). Patel, Sairra. “The Media and its Representation of Islam and Muslim Women”. (In) *young women: a Message to the Media*, 1999. London: Women Press.⁴⁶

Rana Kabbani in her book discussed how the journalist deliberately misquoted her point of view about Islam and rights of women. She was disappointed with the professional dishonesty of the journalists. She wrote it was one more unrelieved catalogue of horrors about Islam. It ignored any of the important debate within Islam about the rights of women.⁴⁷

Kashif Z. Sheikh, Vincent rice, and Hayg Oshagan, in their research article entitled “press treatment of Islam” what kind of picture do the media paint”, have investigated portrayals of Muslims in the media, drawing upon an analysis, of articles appearing in the Times of London, The Los Angles Times, the New York Times and The Detroit Free press from 1988 to 1992. The research examined the types of stories that were written about Muslims, how Muslims were characterized, and over all tone of the stories. The first hypothesis, which predicted that most coverage would be international, was tested through an examination of story datelines. This hypothesis was generally supported. Its assessment is presented in the form of table.

Table: STORY DATE LINE

| Date time | No. stories | Percentag ^e |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|------------------------|
| United States | 83 | 21% |
| Europe (other then UK) | 71 | 18% |
| Lebanon | 62 | 15% |
| Middle East (other than Lebanon) | 59 | 15% |
| Great Britain | 42 | 10% |
| Asia | 53 | 13% |
| Other | 30 | 8% |
| Total | 400 | 100 |

The second hypothesis, which predicted that the most of the coverage would take place during crisis events and times of war and conflict, was measured by categories pertaining to the general context of the story. The data also confirmed the expectation of the second hypothesis. Fifty six percent of the stories were either about crisis, event or war and conflict.

The following tables give a break down of stories by general topic.

| Date line | No. stories | Percentage |
|------------------------|-------------|------------|
| Crisis events | 121 | 30% |
| War and conflict | 101 | 25% |
| Islamic world politics | 58 | 15% |
| Other miscellaneous | 68 | 17% |
| Religion | 52 | 13% |
| Total | 400 | 100 |

Table story topic

The findings indicate that most stories (53%) concerning Muslims were explicit about the particular country and nationality of Muslims. Similarly, the 14% of stories dealing with Muslim individuals another dimension of coverage of Muslims is given in following table.

Table: Reference to Muslims in particular Nations

| Nations | No. of stories | Percentage |
|---|----------------|------------|
| Middle East (other than Lebanon, Iraq and Iran) | 33 | 16% |
| Lebanon | 29 | 14% |
| Asia (other than India) | 26 | 12% |
| Bosnia | 24 | 11% |
| Europe (other than Bosnia and Great Britain) | 21 | 10% |

| | | |
|---------------|-----|-----|
| India | 17 | 8% |
| Africa | 18 | 8% |
| Iran | 14 | 7% |
| Iraq | 11 | 5% |
| Great Britain | 11 | 5% |
| United States | 9 | 4% |
| Total | 213 | 100 |

Of the 108 total stories making reference of groups or organizations, 71% were about groups from the Middle East. The most frequently mentioned were three Shiite groups in Lebanon:

- The Hezbollah (23%)
- Islamic Jihad (12%)
- Amal Militia (8%)

Forty eight other groups were the subjects of stories, including PLO, the Islamic Salvation Front Algeria, and the Nation of Islam. The most frequently mentioned were

- Ayatollah Khomeini (13%)
- Saddam Hussain (13%)

Thirty three other Muslims individuals were subjects of stories, including king Hussain of Jordan, Louis Farra Khan of the nation of Islam, and Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan.

Similarly, the analysis revealed that the term fundamentalist was used in 27% of the stories and that other negative terms (Fanatic, extremist, radical, terrorist or militant) were used in 26% of the stories,

overall, 53% of the stories used one or more such negative terms to describe Muslim groups.⁴⁸

- ◎ Francis Ghiles has critically investigated about the nature of reporting by the Western Media pertaining to Islam and Muslim world.⁴⁹
- ◎ Jorgan Nielson and others have comprehensively focused on Arabs and the West. The researchers have presented the mutual image of both nations.⁵⁰
- ◎ Daniel Norman in the article entitled “Islam and the West: the making of an image” has described how the image of Islam was constructed, developed and disseminated by the west.⁵¹
- ◎ Zebiri Kat has described the perception and approaches of Christian and Islamists and theologians about Islam and Muslims.⁵²
- ◎ Jabal Muhammad Bauben has described that how the Western media constructed, depicts and presents the image of Prophet Muhammad (SAW).⁵³

Ksilov and R Zemenkov in their book titled “United States and Islamic world” have also attempted to analyze various aspects of relations between United States and Islamic world.⁵⁴ J Baudrilliard in his contribution has interpreted that Gulf war was virtually fought by the United States media. He has highlighted the way United States media was used by the United States Government as a instrument of propaganda and image building.⁵⁵

A. B. Badren, in his doctoral dissertation has carried out content analysis of United States and European newspapers about Arab Israeli conflict. In

this connection, the researcher has examined editorial page of these newspapers, which appeared during 1960-82.⁵⁶

J. M. Belkaui in his research article has attempted to explore how the prestige media has presented image of Arabs and Israelis. The researcher has minutely examined the content United States elite press during the specific time period from 1966 -74.⁵⁷

Joseph Brewada has critically examined the Middle East crisis as well a mentioned the pivotal role of super power in preparing Middle East war.⁵⁸

Willaim Costanzo in his article has focused on the role of media in building images of any communities with perspective of Islam and Muslims.⁵⁹

John Dart and Jimmy Allen in their research article have comprehensively explained role of the news media in projections or distortions of religion.⁶⁰

C. Adams in his book has described coverage of the Middle East issue by United States TV networks.⁶¹

Umar Afzal in his article has critically written about role of United States media regarding Middle East conflict.⁶² Salam Al Marayati in his research article entitled “the Rising Tide of Hostile stereotyping of Islam” has explored that United States & Western media are responsible for propagating and disseminating negative and stereotype perceptions about Islam and Muslims.⁶³ M. Ali in his article entitled “Western Media and Muslim world”, has concluded that Western print and electronic media is fully responsible for spreading derogatory languages and negative images about Muslims.⁶⁴ Roy F. Fox has also critically written

about how the images distort or build up by the media and mind.⁶⁵ G. Gerbner in his article has also explained the case of Middle East in light of United States mass media.⁶⁶

J. E. Haynes in his article entitled “Keeping cool about Kabul: The Washington post and the New York Times cover the communist seizure of Afghanistan”, has comprehensively analyzed the coverage of two United States newspapers about occupations of Afghanistan by former USSR.⁶⁷

J Heumann in his research article entitled “United States network Television Melodrama and the Iranian crisis” has highlighted role of United States media about Iranian revolution.⁶⁸

M Kern in his article has minutely described the coverage of Western media pertaining to the invasion of Afghanistan by the former USSR.⁶⁹

Bernard Lewis in his article entitled “The Roots of Muslim Rage” has categorically equated Islam with fundamentalism and depicted image of Muslims in unfavorable manner.⁷⁰

E. Mortimer in his article entitled “Islam and the Western journalist” has explained perception of the journalists about Islam, Muslim and Islamic world.⁷¹

WG Oxtoby in his article has focused on Western perception of Islam in general and the Arabs in particular. The researcher has critically explained the phenomenon of western perception and stereotype about Islam with perceptive of media.⁷²

M. Rutherford B paraschos in his article has conducted content analysis, of United States electronic media regarding invasion of Lebanon by Israel in 1982.⁷³

Amos Perlmutter, in his article, appeared in the Washington Post, has critically discussed Islamic fundamentalist network, and their activities in disturbing peace of the globe. He presented these networks as a hub of terrorism and den of terrorists.⁷⁴

Sharaf N Rehman in his article entitled "Muslim images in American cinemas" has explored that Holly Wood movies have been portraying Muslims and Islam in distorting manner. The movies have depicted Muslims as barbaric, rustic and uncivilized creatures on the earth.⁷⁵

Sharif & Rehman in his another article has critically written about portrayal of Arabs in the Western mass media.⁷⁶

J. G. Shaheen has written about role of United States TV network in building and distorting the image of Arabs in eyes of the world.⁷⁷

J. G Shaheen in another article has comprehensively focused on the issue of media coverage of the Middle East. The author has explained gravity of phenomenon with perspective of United States media perception and American foreign policy towards Arab countries.⁷⁸

Jeffery L. Sheler has described demographics and psychographics of Muslim in United States. The researcher has also discussed Islam as pervasive and emerging religion in United States.⁷⁹

Mendenhold & J. J. Terry has researched about United States press coverage on Middle East during the year of 1973.⁸⁰

Richard Wormer in his book entitled “American Islam” has highlighted various aspects i.e. historical, cultural, ethnical and social of Islam and Muslim in United States.⁸¹

Robin Wright in his book entitled “Sacred Rage: the wrath of Militant Islam” has portrayed Muslim as a militant fanatics.⁸²

Miller Randell and Allen Woll have critically examined the role of American TV in building stereotype perception / images of various races and ethnic groups including Muslims.⁸³

Nayyar Zaidi in his article entitled “Medium is the mischief” has blamed the print and electronic media particularly western and United States media in portraying false image of Islam and Muslim in the world.⁸⁴

E. W. Said has comprehensively described the role of scholars and media in aggravating or solving the issue of the Middle East.⁸⁵ A Burreli, in his Master level dissertation has critically analyzed the role of media in manipulation of images with perspective of Islam and Muslims⁸⁶.

G. Goethal in his book entitled “electronic Golden calf images, Religion and making of meaning” has presented in-depths analysis of mainstream media in creating or distorting images of adherent, of religion with special reference to Islam.⁸⁷

Haden and Shups has described about the immense power of television in dissemination and projection of divine law as well as he pointed out how the regimes are utilizing or exploiting the power of media for their political objectives.⁸⁸

G. Kepel has written in his book entitled “Allah in the West” about penetration and pervasiveness of Islam in the West. The author has critically analyzed the activities of Islamic movements in United States and Europe.⁸⁹

Sardar and Davies have extensively explained the role of media in distorting images of Muslims. The case of Salman Rushdie was thoroughly discussed in this book.⁹⁰ H. E. Kassis in his article has presented in depths analysis, regarding the misconception of Christian about Islam and Muslim.⁹¹

Karim H. Karim has extensively presented in depth critical analysis regarding the Islamic peril. In his book, he described the role of Western and United States media in proposing distorted misconception of Islam and Muslim. (Canada, largest newsweekly) illustrate this stark contrast in treatment. The stories were, respectively, the suspected involvement of Sheikh Omar Abdul Rehman in the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center and the deadly clash of the Branch Devidians with United States Federal Agenda in Waco Texas, the article about Sheikh Omar were punctuated with references such as Muslim Clerics’ Islamic Holy war, Sunni Worshipers, Muslim fundamentalist, Islamic fundamentalist, movements, in Time, Islamic Link, Muslim sect, Sunni Sect, Islamic Community, the Islamic movement, Islamic populism, Muslim fundamentalism, and Islamic fundamentalists, extremists Muslims terrorist group, Muslim militant, in MacLean; however, the there north American magazines completely avoided using the adjective Christian to describe the Branch Devidians, even though they did report that three leader had claimed to be Christ and quoted from scripture.⁹²

Dr. Khalid in his research article has examined and analyzed coverage/portrayal of six Muslim countries in four major newspapers of United States (the New York Times, Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal and the Los Angles Times. A total of 1829 news stories about the six Muslim countries appeared during three years periods from 1995-1997. Overall the study found that portrayal of all six Muslim countries (Egypt, Turkey, Indonesia, Pakistan, Iran and Libya) was very negative. Moreover 368 news stories were content analyzed. These stories contained pejorative terms 334 times e.g. fundamentalism, terrorism, militant, and fanatics) to depict the Muslims. These findings supported the propaganda, framework which had predicted that unfavorable events and issues would receive considerable media coverage / attention, while other more peaceful, positive and developmental activities would be play down or ignored or perhaps even denigrated.⁹³

Conclusion:

In this research article, the review of more than 80 studies of Portrayal of Islam and Muslim world has been presented. It can be concluded in convenient manner that several studies have endorsed/proved the power of media that audience, communicate in the language used by the channel, they mostly follow the media agenda, respond according to the media reports, and even contemplate on the patterns recommend to them by media contents. It can be said the media conglomerates slow and steadily developed as a force to reckon within the business of shaping, reshaping, building or distorting the images of the nations, communities, religion, caste, colour, creed and different ethnic groups. In the world of information technology, million of people

are looking at the world events through the prism of media. It is said that elite media of USA carry out propaganda service for the manipulation of information on behalf of the corporate and political establishment. In view of Edward, Harman, main stream media primarily utilize the tricks of language that serve propaganda ends with the perspective of manipulation of images. For instances, “word terrorist is applied to the target enemy (Iran) or the enemy of our friend (*Hamas, Hezbollah, PLO, the Khuridsh, PKK*) not the constructively engages regimes of Turkey, Columbia, Israel or the apartheid government of South Africa”.

Similarly it was also found as several studies substantiated this concept on solid grounds that American mainstream media has been remained instrument in the hands of foreign policy makers White House or pentagon. They carry out instruction of powerful elite in coverage of international events or in the other words, US main stream media projects White House agenda in order to achieve the goals of American foreign policy around the globe Chomsky and Herman urged that media's objective in a free society is to manufacture consent among the government rallying the population to endorse elite decisions. American main stream media has been equating Islam with fundamentalism. It is said that this term is a concoction of American policy makers and contrivances of American and western media moguls. and due to the manipulative technique of repetition frequently used by the main stream media, the term fundamentalism is conceived by the US and Europe necessarily a recourse to terrorism, radicalism, extremism and fanaticism words like fundamentalism terrorist extremist militant and violent were found to be linked with there other words Muslim, Islam and Islamic.

The findings of various studies indicated that America main stream elite media like New York Times, Washington Post, Newsweek, Time Magazine, CNN, CBS and NBC have been distorting the image of Islamic world.

Lastly, after the review of various studies it was also found that such negative words and phrases were applied or associated with Islamic world. For example “Islamic militant from Pakistan”, “Pakistan backed Muslim rebels”, “Islamic terrorist training camp”, “Islamic fundamentalist theme”, rogue state “Taliban are the pawn of Pakistan Intelligence Agencies”, “Pakistan maintained links with terrorists in the region”, “Libya supports terrorists”, “Iranian or Palestinian terrorist groups”, “Pan Arab fanaticism”, “Libya’s terrorism”, “Militant Muslims” have been used for American enemies Islamic countries. Similarly positive and favorable words and phrases have also used for US friendly countries like Jordan, Turkey, Egypt and Saudi Arabia.

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